DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 472 020 JC 030 083

AUTHOR	Gordon, Michael
TITLE	Part-Time Faculty in Community Colleges: The Jury Is Still Out.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	15p.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070) -- Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adjunct Faculty; *College Faculty; Community Colleges; *Compensation (Remuneration); Employer Employee Relationship; Fringe Benefits; Health Insurance; Justice; *Part Time Faculty; *Teacher Employment Benefits; Teaching Load; Two Year Colleges; Vacations; Values; Wages
IDENTIFIERS	*Florida

ABSTRACT

This paper examines a number of issues associated with part-time faculty in community colleges. In the area of part-time faculty integration, the author surveyed 28 Florida colleges using an online survey, and received responses from 20, for a response rate of 71.4%. The survey contained five questions: (1) Are adjunct/part-time faculty listed in the printed catalog? (2) Does the college have an online faculty and staff directory on its web site? (3) Are adjunct/part-time instructors listed in the online directory? (4) Does the college provide their full-time faculty with campus e-mail addresses? and (5) Are adjunct/part-time faculty provided with campus e-mail addresses? All of the responding colleges had an online faculty and staff directory on their web sites. Of those, nine colleges (45%) reported that part-time faculty were listed in the directory, 10 colleges (95%) provided their full-time faculty with campus e-mail addresses, and 15 colleges (75%) provided their pat-time faculty with campus e-mail addresses. The paper also offers an overview of the following part-time faculty issues: (1) a review of the literature; (2) financial and other benefits to colleges of hiring part-time faculty; (3) the negative impacts of part-time faculty on the institution, the students, and the full-time faculty members; and (4) part-time faculty job satisfaction. (Contains 15 references.) (Author/NB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 472 020

PART-TIME FACULTY IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES: THE JURY IS STILL OUT

Michael Gordon
Instructor / Business Technologies
St. Petersburg College
Clearwater Campus

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Gordon

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Mailing Address:
2333 Feather Sound Dr. B604
Clearwater, Florida 33762

Phone: 727 278 1379

FL030083

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Michael Gordon
EDH 6061, Dr. Jan Ignash
1/18/03

PART-TIME FACULTY IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES: THE JURY IS STILL OUT

Much has been written about the plight of college part-time faculty in the popular press in recent years, due to the dramatic rise of this workforce in higher education. Typically, part-time faculty are portrayed as exploited road scholars that are barely able to make a living. They have been referred to as a "sort of migrant underclass in academia" (Smith, 2001). There is, however, a wealth of scholarly writings on the subject that paints a more complex and colored picture of part-time faculty, both from the perspective of the faculty and the institutions that employ them. This paper will attempt to present some consistent themes and findings from that body of research. It will also attempt to draw some reasonable conclusions regarding part-time faculty based on this information. As a final goal, it will attempt to add new data to existing research data regarding part-time faculty integration, through an original online survey conducted in November 2002. Survey results will indicate the extent to which the part-time faculty have been integrated into the web sites and email services of Florida community colleges.

A PROFILE OF PART-TIME FACULTY

Much work has been done to accurately describe the current state of part-time faculty employment in higher education. This is particularly pertinent as it relates to community colleges, which employ a higher proportion of part-time faculty than any other sector of higher education. The latest figures indicate that on average 58% of community college faculty is part-time. (Anthony & Valadez, 2002). This percentage has risen dramatically in the last 15 years (Lane, 2002). In some community colleges, part-time faculty account for as much as 70% of the total faculty (Brewster, 2000).

Part-time faculty are more often male (52.6%) (Anthony & Valadez, 2002). Most part-time faculty are employed an average of 5.4 years at the same institution (Lee, 1995). This reveals that in most cases part-time status is not a short-term condition of employment. Part-time faculty are either older or younger on average than full-time faculty (Lee, 1995). 71.1% of part-time faculty hold a master's degree as their highest level of education (Anthony & Valadez, 2002). Incidentally, this figure is relatively consistent with that of full-time faculty in community colleges, in which 66.4% hold master's degrees (Gahn & Twombly, 2001). It has also been found that part-time faculty are more likely to teach certain courses, particularly in English and foreign languages. (Cox & Leatherman, 2000). Regarding socioeconomic background, these faculty are more likely to come from middle or lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Faculty who come from higher socioeconomic background are more likely to be employed full-time (Anthony & Valadez, 2002).

A part-time faculty member at a community college spends an average of 36 hours a week on work related to his or her teaching responsibilities. (Lane, 2002) Recently, in Seattle, Washington, unionized part-time faculty sued to be compensated for time spent outside of the classroom. The suit however was rejected, on the grounds that part-time faculty are not protected under the Minimum Wage Act. The court upheld the decision that part-time faculty are hired under individual contracts, which state that compensation includes pay for work outside the classroom (Freedman, 2000).

Michael Gordon
EDH 6061, Dr. Jan Ignash
1/18/03

WHY DO COLLEGES LIKE PART-TIME FACULTY?

The reasons for the widespread use of part-time faculty are well known and range from the purely financial to the academic. First and foremost, the reason seemingly most often cited is that part-time faculty simply cost less than full-time faculty. Specifically, studies have shown, full-time faculty earn from 2 times to as much as 3½ times as much as part-time faculty, in certain parts of the country. (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). However "cost" is a general term. In addition to getting paid less, most part-timers don't receive any form of benefits, including health coverage, sick days, or vacation. They are also easier to fire. (Brewster, 2000)

There are however other motivations than the strictly financial for hiring part-timers. Often times, part-time faculty bring higher levels of vocational experience to the classroom. Certain vocations, such as law enforcement or computer engineering, can perhaps be better taught by those working in the field. They also provide a valuable link to the workplace. These faculty can provide an effective link to local employers in the community, an asset that is crucial in a community college environment.

Part-time faculty also offer the institution increased flexibility in matching the demands of varied enrollment (Fulton, 2000). This is true particularly in the areas of technology, where new technologies emerge rapidly, not allowing adequate time for full-time faculty mastery. Again, this is a crucial asset for community colleges, which must respond quickly to the training needs of the community.

Michael Gordon
EDH 6061, Dr. Jan Ignash
1/18/03

WHY DOES THE PROFESSION DISLIKE PART-TIME FACULTY?

There has been much written, particularly in the popular press, depicting the downside of widespread part-time faculty utilization. It has been alleged repeatedly that part-time faculty harm full-time faculty by eliminating a certain number of full-time positions (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Is has also been alleged that the part-time faculty degrade the academic quality and integrity of the institution, because their teaching skills are inferior to full-time faculty.

Interestingly however, there are few scholarly studies that find the quality of part-time faculty instruction to be inferior to that of full-time faculty. Some notable studies that have been done have been inconclusive. (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Numerous studies have cited little or no difference in terms of teaching skills between part-time and full-time faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roueche, Roueche, & Millron, 1996 in Brewster, 2000). Ironically, the inability to prove part-time faculty inferiority in the classroom, is a potentially greater threat to full-time faculty survival and to an extent a discredit to the academic profession itself.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

If academic quality is unaffected and the institution saves money, then one could easily argue for an even wider-spread use of part-time faculty, or perhaps the complete replacement of full-time faculty. However many institutions have chosen to draw the line at certain part-time/full-time ratios. It has been suggested that if a college is trying to teach sections with part-timers that could be taught by full-timers, then the institution is

using too many part-time faculty (Fulton, 2000). In 1988, California passed a law requiring that 75% of all classroom instruction be conducted by full-time faculty. Unfortunately, the state itself has not been able to meet its own mandate, with only 64% of classes taught by full-time faculty (Lane, 2002).

Brewster does a fine job of describing the difficulty in determining the impact that large numbers of part-time faculty have on our institutions, when he compares higher education to business. He writes. "There is, however, a very significant difference between the corporation and the academy, and it has nothing to do with the humane treatment of employees. The former has an absolute metric bottom line. If a practice helps, it shows up in the form of profits, and if it hurts, it shows up as losses. The measurement of academic outcomes is difficult at best, and is certainly not metric in nature" (Brewster, 2000, p5). This statement suggests that today's higher education institutions could be unknowingly undermining their academic integrity by employing such high numbers of part-time faculty, because effective measures have yet to be found that can measure the academic impact of this practice.

Another important issue is the question of whether students view part-time faculty differently than they do full-timers. Do they view them as lower class or inferior instructors? For example, it has been stated that part-time faculty tend to be more concerned with student evaluations than their full-time counterparts, because their term to term employment is often based on this feedback. Students that are aware of this concern may attempt to strong-arm an instructor with the threat of a poor evaluation (Foster &

Foster in Brewster, 2000). In turn, a feeling of disconnection from the institution may influence these faculty to present a different impression of the institution than full-time faculty. For example, if a student complains to an instructor in class about the college's tuition or the state of facility, will a part-time faculty member be less likely to defend the institution, in the face of public criticism?

PART-TIME FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION

Some recent research has been done on evaluating the emotional satisfaction level of part-time faculty. This is a crucial question, because job satisfaction can affect job performance. A large proportion of universally dissatisfied part-time faculty will likely have a pervasively negative impact on the quality of education throughout higher education. However, the data in this area has often been inconclusive, or even contrary to popular belief. Recent findings show that part-time faculty actually report higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs than do full-time faculty members. (Anthony & Valadez, 2002). In fact, even in specific areas such as pay, benefits, advancement opportunities, and job security, they are found to be equally as concerned with these issues as full-time faculty, not more so (Anthony & Valadez, 2002). Clearly these findings contradict popular perception on the level of job satisfaction among part-time faculty.

Other findings, however, support the general dissatisfaction of this majority group. In part, the motivation of part-time faculty members must be considered when evaluating job satisfaction, as to whether the person working in a part-time position is doing so

primarily to aspire to full-time status. Studies have shown that almost half of all part-time faculty would aspire to full-time positions if given the opportunity (Lee, 1995). This particular group of faculty tend not be satisfied indefinitely with their part-time positions (Roueche & Roueche, 1996).

On the other hand, there may be those faculty that prefer part-time status, such as those that already have rewarding full-time jobs or are retired. These folks may prefer the flexibility of the schedule and may not want a long-term commitment. Many of these part-timers are not teaching for the financial benefit, but for other reasons, such as to stay fresh in their field or just for the satisfaction of teaching.

PART-TIME FACULTY INTEGRATION:

One area that has been found closely linked to part-time faculty satisfaction is the degree to which these faculty can be successfully integrated into the institution. Unfortunately institutions often do a poor job in this area. Most colleges do not even have specific college-wide policies or strategies in place related to part-time faculty integration (Roueche & Roueche, 1996). In most cases the integration strategy, if one exists, is a product of each individual administrator or department head, resulting in vast inconsistencies in the way integration is approached and carried out (Roueche & Roueche, 1996).

As part of any integration policy, frequent and meaningful communication between full and part-time faculty is essential to help the part-timers feel more linked to the institution

(Roueche & Roueche, 1996). There are, however, mechanical limitations to communication between the two groups, in that they are often not both present at the same times throughout the day to interact with each other. Special collaborative meetings can be held regularly to help bridge this gap; however, part-timers typically resent having to be present on campus when they are not being compensated.

The most common means of increasing faculty commitment to the institution has been the institution's support of professional development. (Roueche, Roueche, & Millron, 1996). Colleges often reimburse faculty to attend national and regional professional conferences, or to attend classes. While this approach is highly effective in building organizational loyalty, it is important to point out that it is perhaps the most costly integration strategy.

There are also a number of lower cost integration strategies that could be tried. The Cox & Leatherman (2000) article points out that many part-time faculty find it difficult to do their jobs because students have no way to contact them. A relatively simple method to enhance access to part-time faculty would be listing them on the college's online Faculty & Staff directory and giving them access to their own campus email addresses, as some colleges currently do. This strategy not only makes it easier for students to locate and contact part-time faculty; it also helps part-time faculty feel more integrated into the institution. There is yet the additional benefit, from the students' perspective, of making the part-time faculty member appear more connected to the institution.

New Research into Part-time Faculty Integration

As stated in the introduction, one of the goals of this paper, beyond exploring the research that has been done, is to add new data to existing research data regarding part-time faculty integration. Specifically, to what extent are part-time faculty being included in colleges' online Faculty & Staff directories and email databases? This strategy of inclusion seems to address the issue identified by Roueche & Roueche, of making part-time faculty feel more connected to the institution. From a research standpoint, it also seemed like a very manageable question to ask and to expect reliable feedback on.

The Method

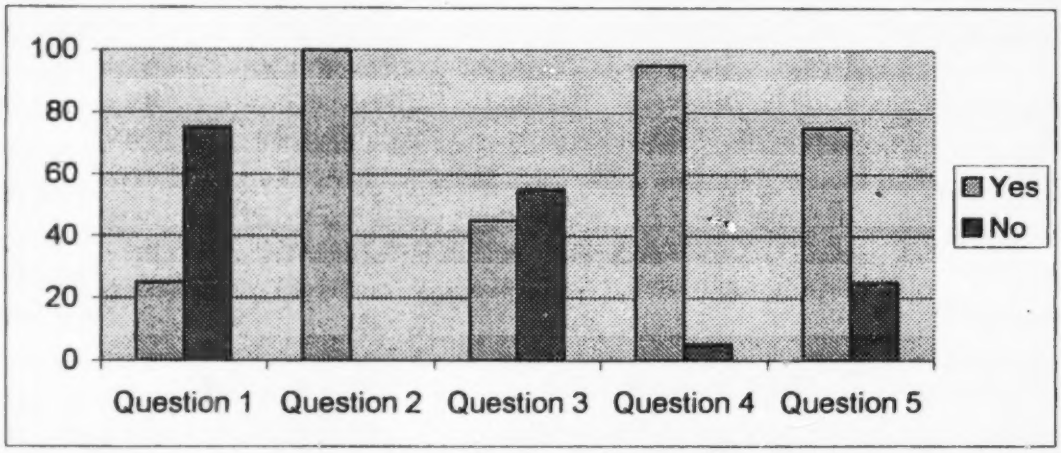
One of the main considerations of the study regarding the data collection process, was to make it as easy as possible to respond, thus an online survey format was chosen to collect the necessary data. This collection of data via this web-based format was particularly of interest because of its scalability and low-cost, and its potential to be used again in future studies on a larger scale.

The survey itself was to be minimal, just containing five questions. The questions were as follows:

1. In general, are adjunct/part-time faculty listed in the printed college catalog?
2. Does the college have an online Faculty & Staff directory on its website?
3. In general, are adjunct/part-time faculty listed in the college's online Faculty & Staff directory?
4. Does the college provide their full-time faculty with campus email addresses?
5. In general, are adjunct/part-time faculty provided with campus email addresses?

THE RESULTS

The results were as follows:



In an effort to keep the study manageable, the sample was limited to the 28 Florida community colleges. Of the 28 Florida community colleges, a total of 20 responses were obtained, or a 71.4% response rate. Based on the feedback, 5 colleges (25%) responded that part-time faculty were listed in the printed college catalog. 100% of the responding colleges had an online Faculty & Staff directory on their websites. Of those, 9 colleges (45%) responded that part-time faculty were listed in the college's online Faculty & Staff directory. 19 colleges (95%) provided their full-time faculty with campus email addresses and 15 colleges (75%) provided their part-time faculty with campus email addresses.

Based on the feedback, the majority of the responding Florida sample could consider adding part-time faculty to their printed and/or online Faculty & Staff directory as a part-time faculty integration strategy. Although the majority did provide their part-time

faculty with campus email addresses, there are still those colleges that have not done so, and may consider this option as well. This research assumes that part-time faculty would be receptive to these offerings and that these measures would be successful integration strategies. Further research in this area, directed at the part-time faculty themselves, could measure the effectiveness of this particular integration strategy.

CONCLUSIONS:

The sheer number of part-time faculty currently employed in higher education requires that this group be taken seriously, and careful consideration should be given to the overall state of their occupation, as they represent the majority of community college faculty. Research to-date has examined the satisfaction levels of part-time faculty, and has revealed some findings that contradict popular opinion. Valuable research has been done and recommendations have been made regarding integration, to help improve the overall satisfaction and effectiveness of part-time faculty. However, the jury is still out on the important question of how the extensive use of part-time faculty affects the state of higher education. At this time, the existing data seems to be inconclusive, but is undoubtedly a critical area for future study. Additional data and findings in all of these areas can help higher education institutions fine-tune their massive part-time faculty force, to use them how and where they are most effective. In doing so, these institutions will not only protect and maintain, but enhance their academic integrity. As stated in McGuire's article, "part-time faculty are only a problem when they are viewed as a source of cheap labor. When employed responsibly, they become treasured resources for the institutional program" (McGuire, 1993).

REFERENCES

Anthony, J. and Valadez, J. (2001, Feb) Job Satisfaction and Commitment of Two-Year College Part-Time Faculty. *Community College Journal of Research & Practice*, Volume 25, 2

Anthony, J. and Valadez, J. (2002) Exploring the Satisfaction of Part-Time College Faculty in the United States. *The Review of Higher Education*, Volume 26, 45-56

Banachowski, G. (1996, Fall). ERIC Review Perspectives and Perceptions: The Use of Part-Time Faculty in Community Colleges. *Community College Review*, Volume 24, 2:49-63

Banachowski, G. (1997, Fall). Advantages and Disadvantages of Employing Part-Time Faculty in Community Colleges. *ERIC Digest*

Brewster, D. (2000, Spring). The Use of Part-Time Faculty in Community College. *Inquiry*, Volume 5, 1:66-67

Cohen, A. and Brawer, F. (1996) *The American Community College, 3rd Ed.* Jossey-Bass Inc.

Cox, A. and Leatherman, C. (2000, December) Study Shows Colleges' Dependence on their Part-Time Instructors. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Volume 47, 14

Freedman, E. (2002, January) Court: Adjuncts Don't Qualify for Minimum Wage. *Community College Week*, Volume 14, 11

Fulton, R. (2000, May/June). The Plight of Part-Timers in Higher Education. *Change*, Volume 32, 3:38-43

Gahn, S. and Twombly S. (2001, Spring) Dimensions of the Community College Labor Market. *The Review of Higher Education*, Volume 24, 3:259-282

Lane, K. (2002, April) Only Partway There. *Community College Week*, Volume 14, 18

Lee, J. (1995, July) Part-Time Faculty Members. *Nation Education Association*, Volume 1, 2

McGuire, J. (1993, June) Part Time Faculty: Partners in Excellence. *Leadership Abstracts*, Volume 6, 6

Roueche, J. and Roueche, S. (1996, Spring) Identifying the Strangers: Exploring Part-Time Faculty Integration in American Community Colleges. *Community College Review*, Volume 23, 4:33-49

Smith, B. (2001, December) Teachers Learn the Part-Time Shuffle. *Toledo Blade*

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Eduation (NLE)
Educational Resources Informtion Center (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Part-Time Faculty in Community Colleges: The Jury is Still Out	
Author(s): Michael Gordon	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date: 1/18/03 originally completed 12/15/02

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE, are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☑

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy

The sample stickeshown below will be affixed to all Leel 2A documents

PERMISSION TCREPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE HIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND I ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTIN SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEENGRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATIOI CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Leve 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissenination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscibers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discreb inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature:	Printed Name/Position/Title: Michael Gordon, Instructor	
Organization/Address: St. Petersburg College	Telephone: 727 561 9401	FAX:
	E-Mail Address: gordonm@spjc.edu	Date: 1/18/03

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, *or*, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges
UCLA
3051 Moore Hall, Box 951521
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521
800/832-8256
310/206-8095 fax

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: info@ericfac.piccard.csc.com
WWW: http://ericfacility.org

EFF-088 (Rev. 9/97)